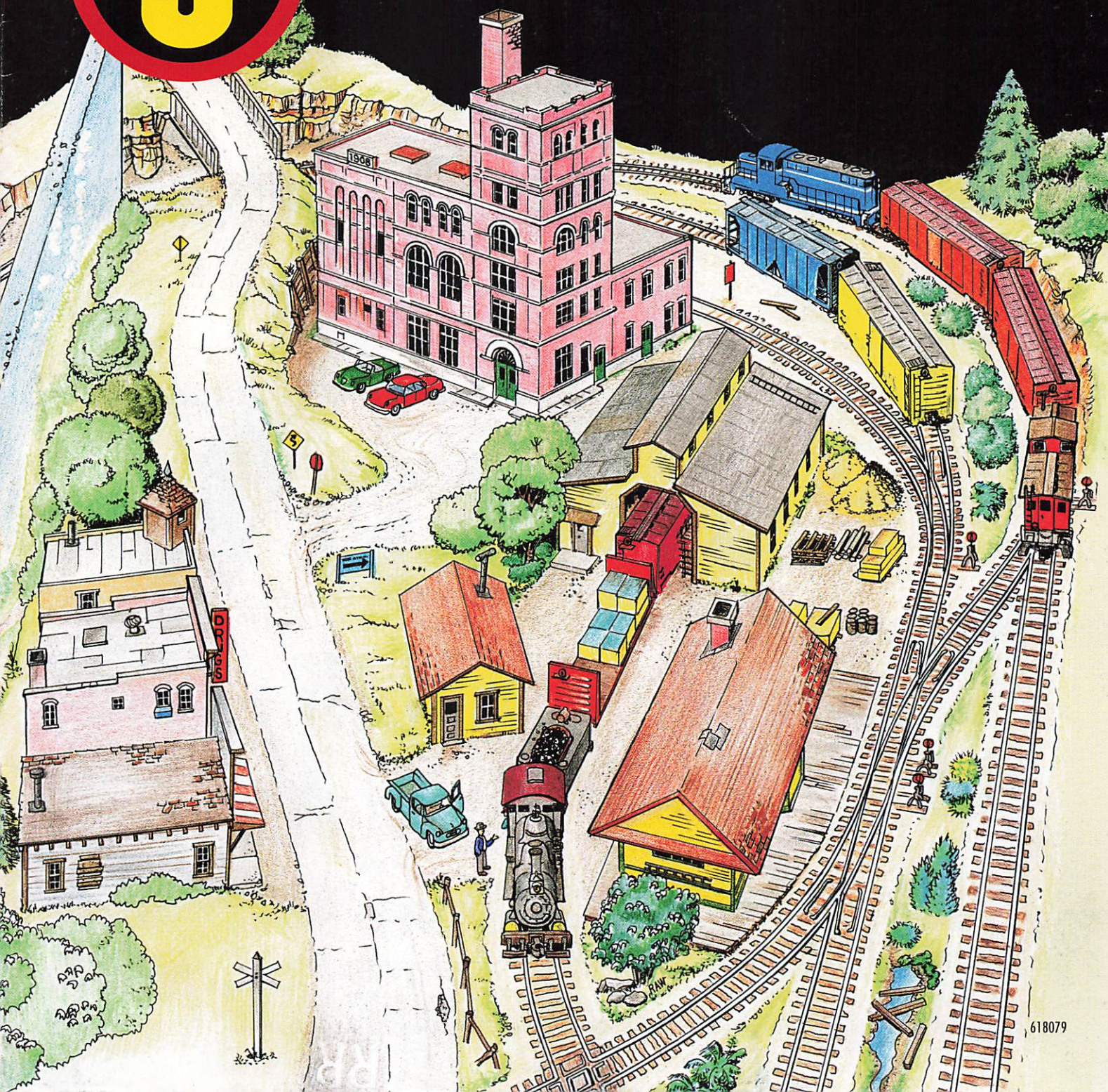


**Model
Railroader**
MAGAZINE

A SUPPLEMENT TO MODEL RAILROADER MAGAZINE
4 x 8 FOOT • HO SCALE • LISTS OF MATERIALS

5 EASY TRACK PLANS



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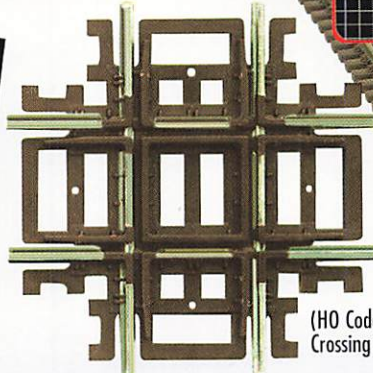
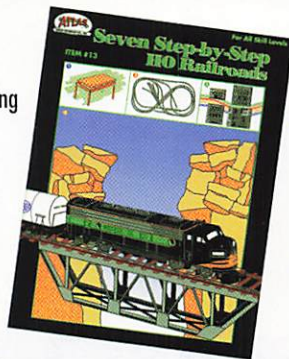
N Code 80 - Black ties/nickel silver rail

(HO True-Track® 3"
Straight Section - Item #452)

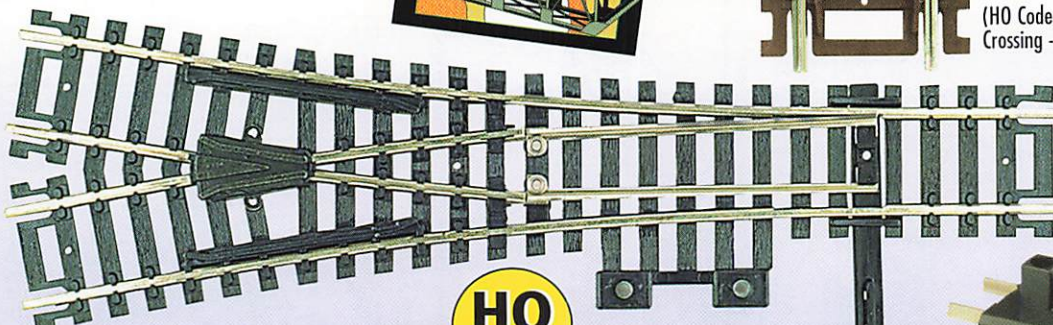
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- #12 The Complete Atlas Wiring Book
- #13 Seven Step-By-Step Railroads (right)
- #14 HO King Size Plan Book

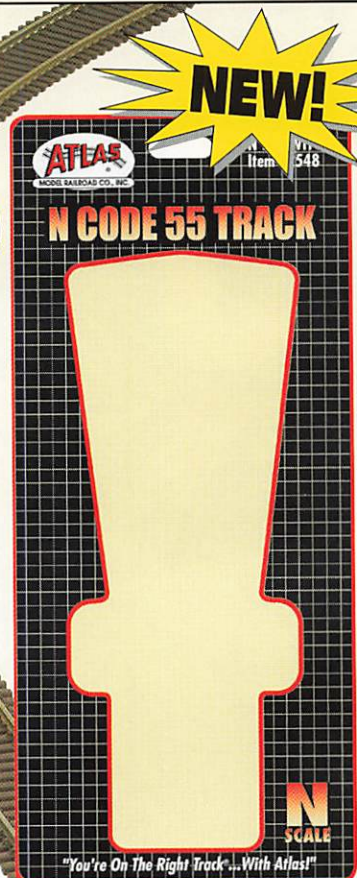


(HO Code 83 90°
Crossing - Item #577)



(HO Code 100 Wye Turnout - Item #280)

**HO
SCALE**



(N Code 55 Flex-Track® -
Item #2000)



(N Code 80 Snap-Track®
Bumper - Item #2536)

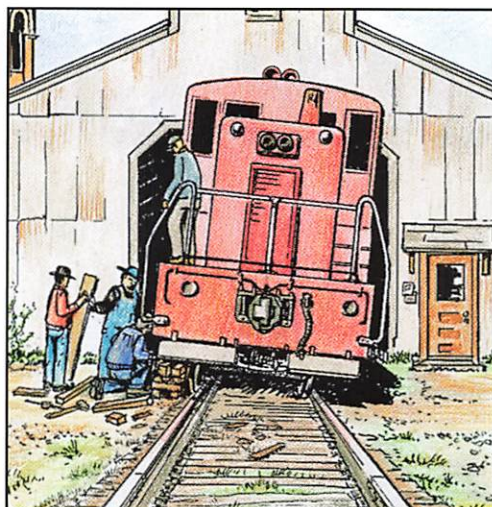
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5 EASY TRACK PLANS

Welcome to *Five Easy Track Plans*, which contains plans for 4 x 8-foot HO model railroads. Building such layouts is a path many take to get started in model railroading, and HO (1:87 proportion to the prototype) is the most widely modeled scale with an abundance of affordable structures, locomotives, and rolling stock available.

The 4 x 8 dimensions are time-tested – that's the size of a sheet of plywood, plenty of track and broad-enough curves can fit on it, and, most importantly, filling those 32 square feet is an achievable goal.

Laying the track listed with these plans, building a small group of structures, and adding scenery is something that even the first-time modeler can accomplish, while those with some experience can build a layout this size as a way of honing their skills before tackling a basement-sized project.

National Train Show plans

To give the public a chance to see what model railroading is all about, each year since 1991 local modelers have built a complete layout during the course of the National Train Show, held in conjunction with the National Model Railroad Association's annual national convention. *MODEL RAILROADER* Magazine provides financial support and usually the track plan for this undertaking.

What appears in this booklet are five recent National Train Show 4 x 8 track plans, along with a bill of materials for constructing each one and some operational possibilities. Each plan was named for the city that hosted the National Train

Show that year, and the industries and scenery reflect the locale.

Do it your way

Remember that these plans are just a starting point – you don't have to follow them to the letter. Your interpretation of the Madison Central probably won't look just like the artist's interpretation on the cover. The scenery techniques you use, what colors you paint the buildings, and the rolling stock you select are what make this *your* unique layout.

There's no right or wrong way to build a model railroad. The trackwork is the most helpful part of each plan, because those curves and turnouts were designed for reliable running. Era and location can vary depending upon your interests. If we used a grain elevator and you would rather have a lumber yard, go for it. The possibilities are endless.

I hope these five track plans inspire you to start building a model railroad or encourage you to return to the hobby. Remember, model railroading is fun!

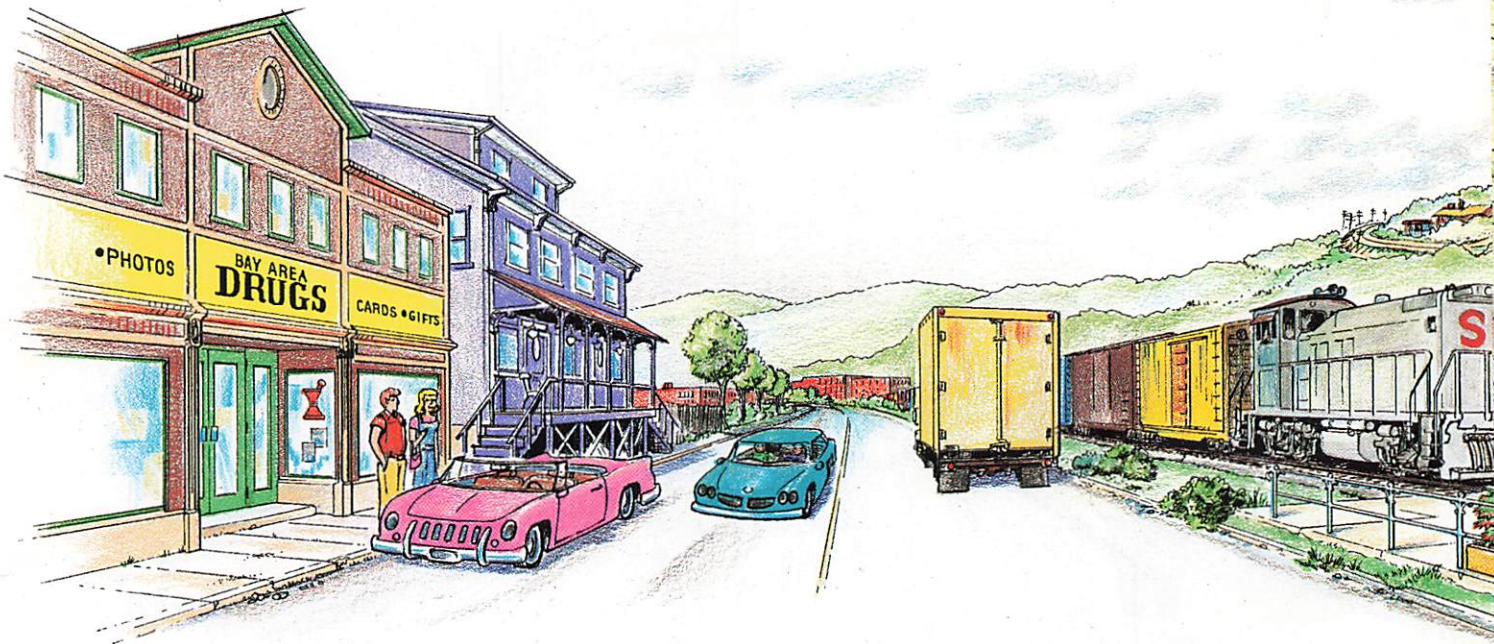
Melanie Buellesbach

MODEL RAILROADER associate editor

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San Jose Central

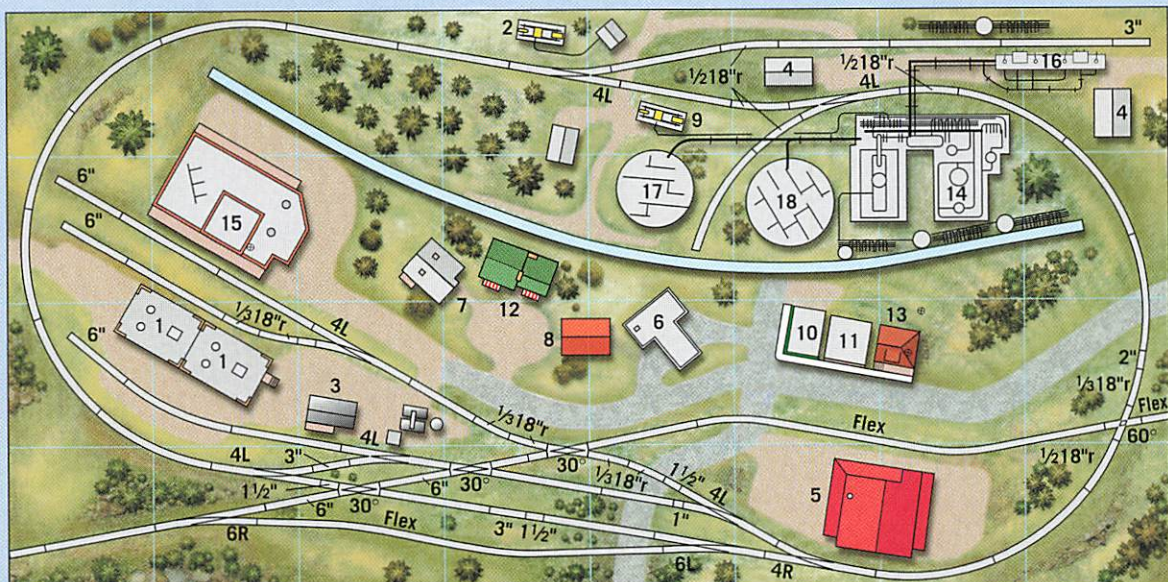


By George Sebastian-Coleman
Illustrations by Robert Wegner
and Elisabeth Rowan

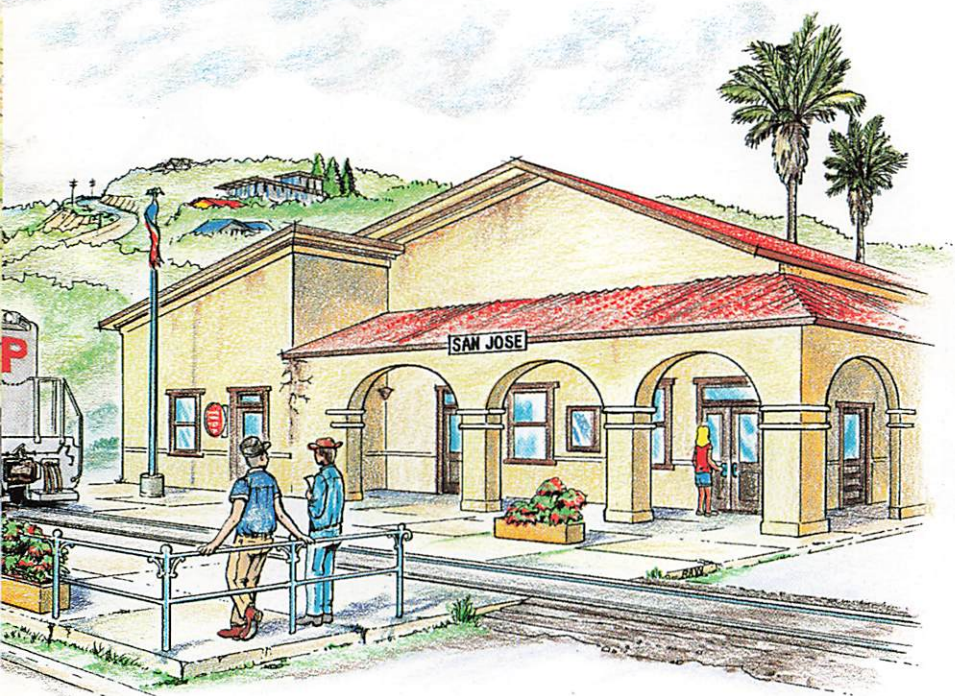
The San Jose Central transports us to California and the San Francisco Bay area. It's built around two of the South Bay's major

businesses, agriculture and oil. The Southern Pacific's main line slashes across the bottom half of the layout, crossing through suburban San Jose and featuring a Spanish-style passenger station and a small residential community. The SP has an interchange connection here with our fictional short line.

As with any 4 x 8 layout, a little imagination is required to add distance. I imagine the set-out track as separate from the nearby industries. A day on the SJC would begin with picking up cars the SP had dropped off overnight (accomplished by physically exchanging cars by hand).



Scale: $\frac{3}{4}$ " = 1'-0" 12" grid



The SJC train would then head out counterclockwise past the station. The first stop is the Steinbeck Oil Refinery. There empty tank cars would be set out and loads picked up.

The train would then continue around the layout to work the agricultural area south of San Jose, represented by the Gilroy Garlic Growers' Co-op, the East Eden Cannery, and a local oil dealer.

The final step would be one more loop around the layout, then set out the interchange cars for the SP.

The structures I have chosen are appropriate from the 1930s to the present, providing you pay careful attention to period details, such as vehicles, signs, and, of course, the rolling stock and locomotives.

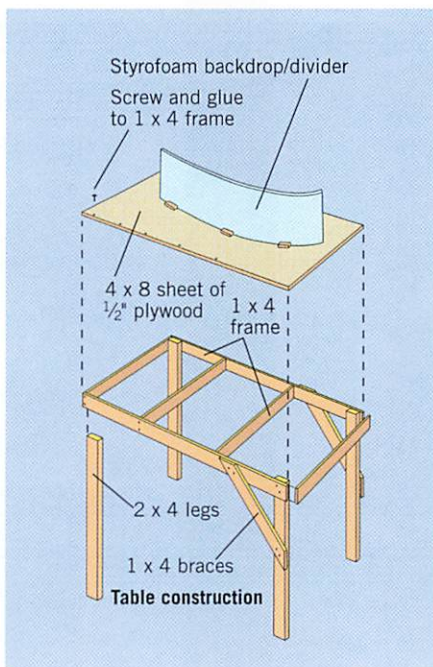
Construction

A simple frame of 1 x 4s supporting a sheet of 1/2" plywood would be an adequate base.

More scenic variety could be attained by using the cookie-cutter method to raise the roadbed or adding a layer of rigid foam to the plywood to permit creating scenery that drops below track level.

I've designed the layout based on Atlas track components. The track list

does not include part numbers as you could use code 100 in either black or brown ties or code 83 components. As it stands, the Southern Pacific main line is really just cosmetic; however it could be connected to staging tracks (or more layout) and become a functional part of the layout. ☛



Bill of materials

Alpine Division

(structures keyed to track plan)

1. 83 Sunkist Citrus Exchange (2)

Faller

2. 272-994 walking-beam oil pump

Grandt Line

3. 5905 standard section tool house
4. 5907 Midwest Petroleum Distributors

Heljan

5. 152 Spanish style station

J. L. Innovative Design

6. 341 Brownies Northside Service

Kibri

7. 405-8061 Parsenn house
8. 405-8062 single-family house

Smalltown USA

9. 6011 John's Place
10. 6017 drug store

SS Ltd.

11. 9124 Jensen oil pump

Vollmer

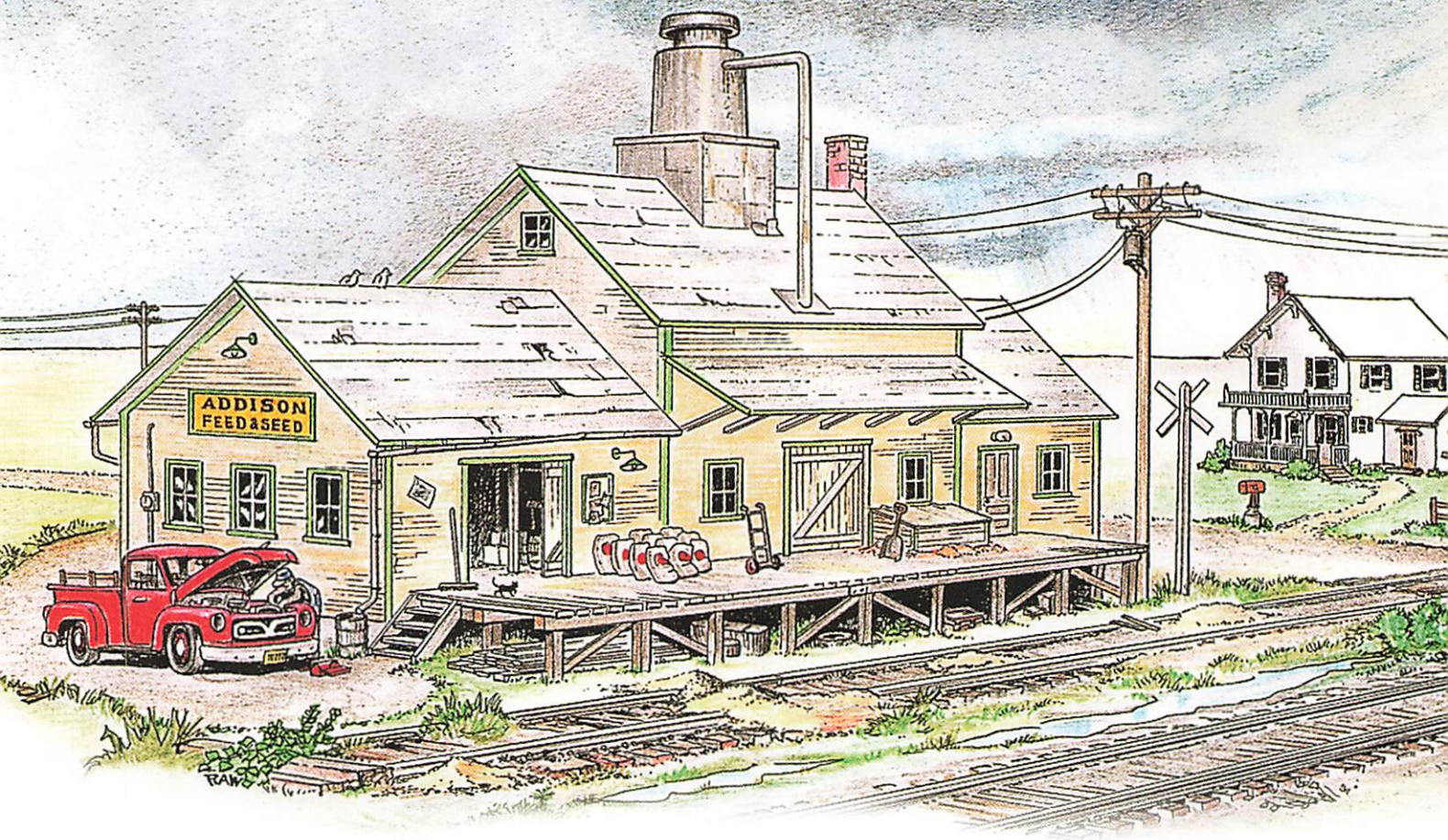
12. 770-3712 ranch house
13. 770-3722 butcher shop

Walthers

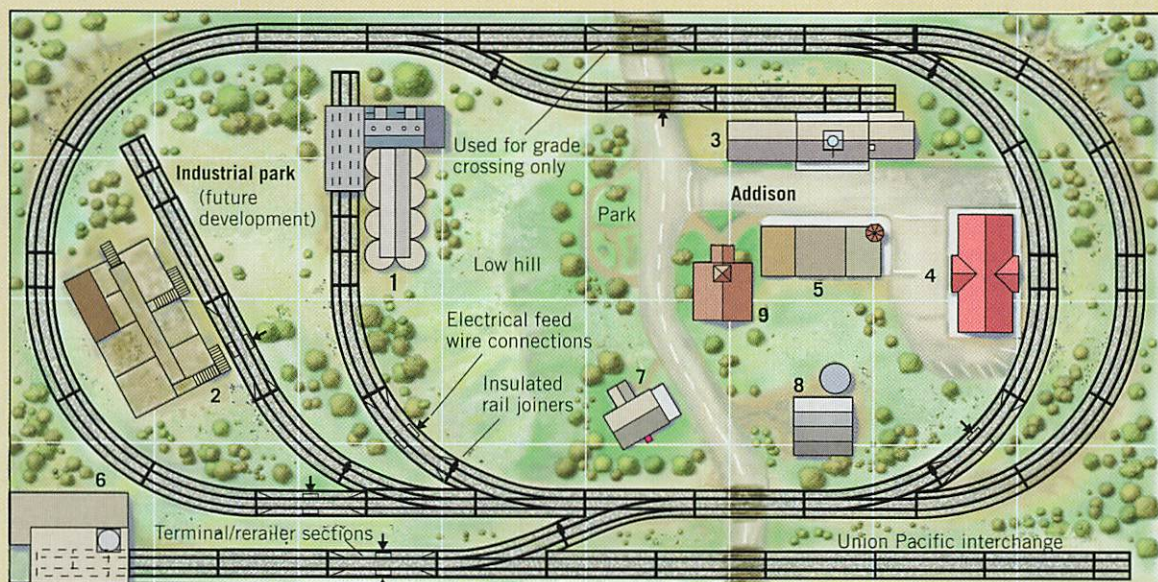
14. 3013 North Island Refinery
15. 3080 Miranda's Bananas
16. 3104 oil loading platform
17. 3120 horizontal oil tank
18. 3155 vertical oil tank

Atlas track

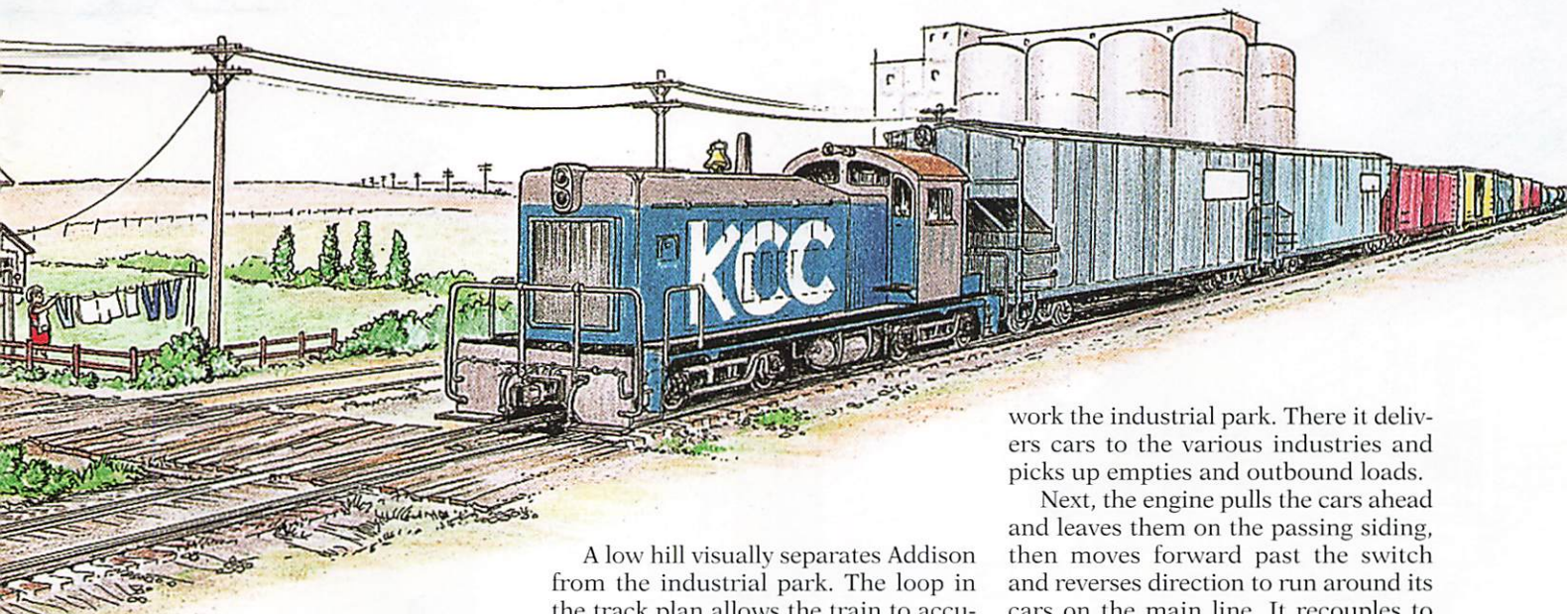
- (2) 36" flextrack
- (16) 9" straight
- (7) 6" straight
- (5) 3" straight
- (4) 1 1/2" straight
- (1) 1" straight
- (13) 18" radius full
- (5) 18" radius 1/2
- (7) 18" radius 1/4
- (3) 30-degree Custom-Line crossing
- (1) 60-degree Custom-Line crossing
- (6) left-hand no. 4 Custom-Line turnout
- (1) right-hand no. 4 Custom-Line turnout
- (1) left-hand no. 6 Custom-Line turnout
- (1) right-hand no. 6 Custom-Line turnout



Kansas City Central



Track plan scale: $\frac{3}{4}'' = 1'-0''$ Grid lines are 12" apart 18"-minimum radius curves True-Track manual Snap-Switches



By Jim Hediger

Illustrations by Robert Wegner

Our fictional HO Kansas City Central represents a modern regional railroad serving a variety of agricultural customers on the outskirts of its namesake city. In theory it was created from several marginal branch lines which the Union Pacific sold off in 1979. These rural branches aren't connected, but operating rights over portions of the UP allow KCC trains to travel from branch to branch.

Our Addison Branch, named for the major town it serves, is 20 rail miles away from the junction with the UP main line, but there's enough industry in town to justify continuing rail service.

Since our KCC is part of a regional mini-system, it's easy to eliminate many space-eating features of an independent railroad. Refueling is done by a local fuel dealer's truck, but heavy maintenance is handled at the KCC's shop located on another branch. Using a yard switcher eliminates the need to turn the engine.

Design factors

The railroad's activity is centered around three areas: the UP interchange, town of Addison, and industrial park.

The straight track along the front edge plays a dual role, initially representing the UP interchange and later serving as part of the industrial park.

A low hill visually separates Addison from the industrial park. The loop in the track plan allows the train to accumulate mileage by running several laps as it travels between the UP interchange and the town. The industries along the way are representative of those found around Kansas City.

Quality operation requires quality benchwork. For this reason, the layout should have a 1/2" plywood top mounted on a grid frame supported with 2 x 4 legs and hardboard gussets. These legs can be unbolted and removed for portability, but provide a very solid base.

Daily operation

A typical day begins when UP's local freight drops off cars at the interchange. The KCC engine picks up these cars, makes a brake test, then heads off on one or two counterclockwise trips around the loop to reach Addison.

The train stops at the station to pick up a switch list before continuing on to

work the industrial park. There it delivers cars to the various industries and picks up empties and outbound loads.

Next, the engine pulls the cars ahead and leaves them on the passing siding, then moves forward past the switch and reverses direction to run around its cars on the main line. It recouples to the other end and begins its return trip, traveling clockwise for several laps before reaching the interchange and dropping off its cars.

The KCC provides limited commuter service between Addison and Kansas City using a secondhand RDC-3 to handle freight, baggage, and passengers. ♦

Bill of materials

Bachmann E-Z track

- (2) 44502 18" radius terminal/rerailer
- (5) 44510 9" terminal/rerailer
- (13) 44512 3" straight
- (3) 44561 remote left-hand turnout
- (4) 44562 remote right-hand turnout
- (18) 44580 18" radius
- (14) 44581 9" straight

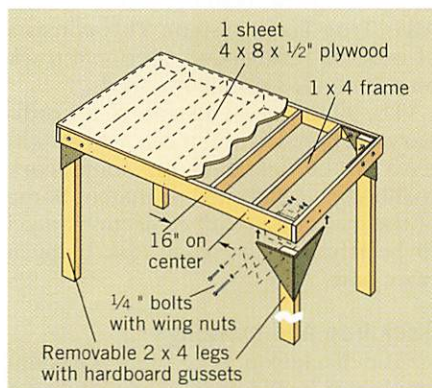
Walthers

(structures keyed to track plan)

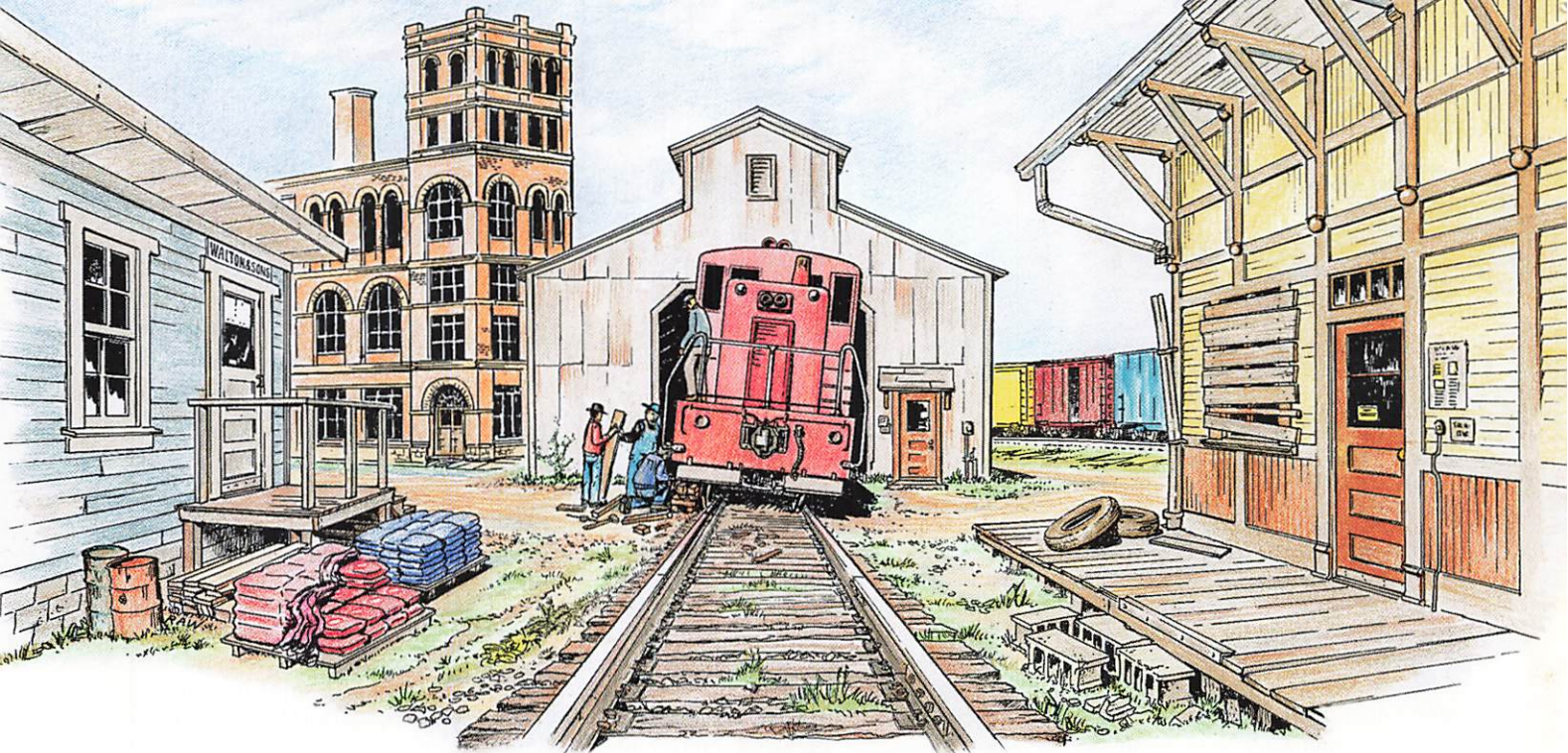
- 1. 3022 ADM grain elevator
- 2. 3047 stockyard
- 3. 3239 Sunrise Feed Mill
- 4. 3063 Clarkesville depot
- 5. 3028 Merchant's Row I
- 6. 3046 Geo. Roberts Printing Inc. (kitbashed)

International Hobby Corp.

- 7. 47776 Aunt Millie's house
- 8. 812 barn with silo
- 9. 4105 town church



St. Paul Central



By Marty McGuirk • Illustrations by Robert Wegner

The St. Paul Central is a fictional short line serving two typical Minnesota communities in the late first-generation diesel era, approximately 1965. The oval track plan includes a city scene and an agricultural community.

The secret to cramming so much action into 32 square feet is a two-sided backdrop down the center of the layout. On one side is a larger city with a big brewery as the centerpiece. The St. Paul Central serves the brewery and other customers and delivers cars to the interchange with the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. A lumber dealer and warehouse for shipping the brewery's products round out the city scene.

The opposite side of this small layout is decidedly less crowded. Nestled among typical Midwestern countryside is a small Minnesota farming community with grain bins and a wooden grain elevator.

I designed the St. Paul Central to utilize easy and lightweight extruded Sty-

rofoam insulation board for the basic table. A simple frame of 1 x 4s like that shown in the benchwork diagram will give the structure more rigidity and prevent the foam from getting dinged. Optional legs can be 2 x 4s cut to length and held in place with carriage bolts.

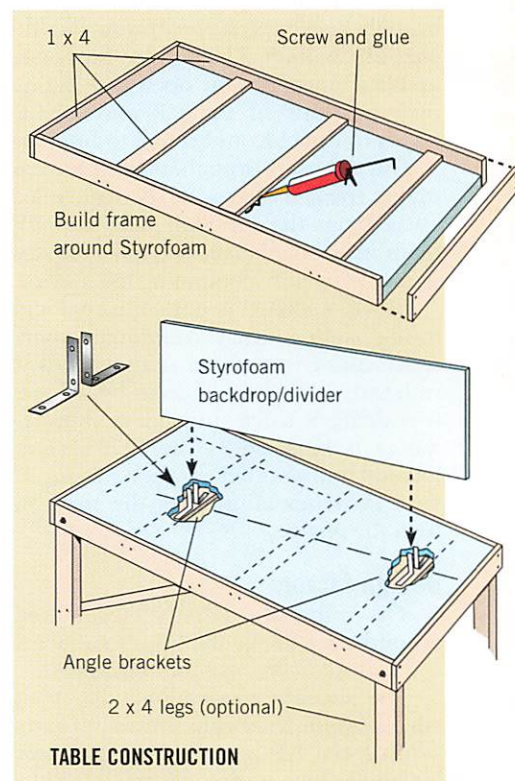
Track and roadbed all-in-one

Since most beginners want to get trains running as soon as possible, I've designed the St. Paul Central to use the Atlas True-Track system. This consists of code 83 nickel-silver sectional track on pre-molded plastic roadbed.

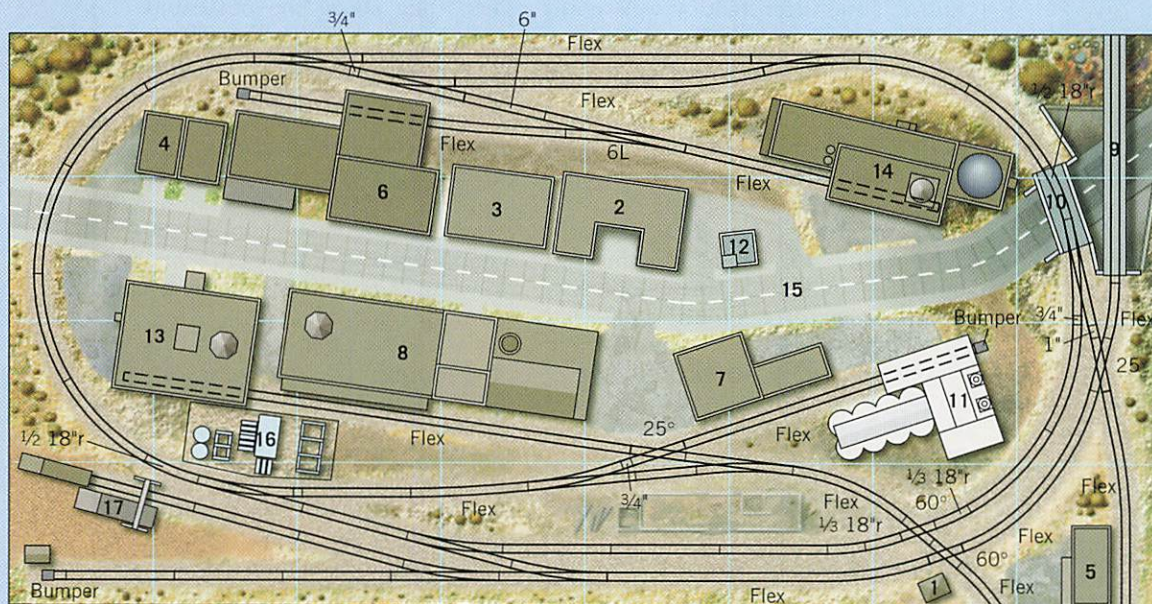
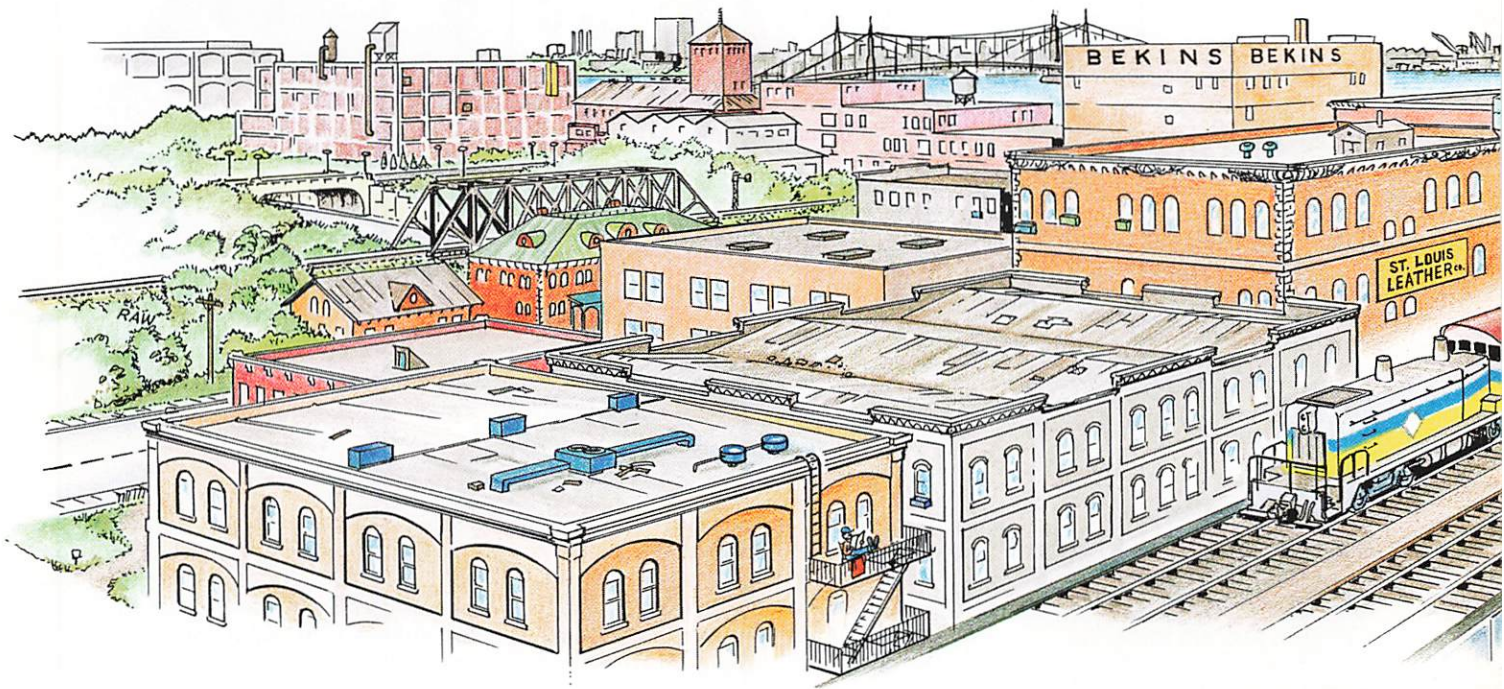
The 60-degree crossing is an ordinary sectional track piece which will have to be installed on some cork roadbed and ballasted to match. Some of the track and roadbed sections need to be trimmed, an easy task using a razor saw.

Backdrop and buildings

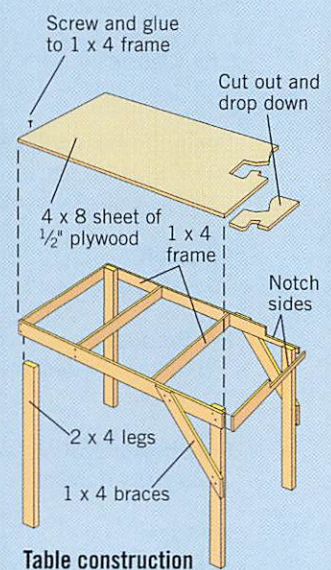
The backdrop is a piece of foam insulation board held in place with a



St. Louis Central



Scale: $\frac{3}{4}$ " = 1'-0" 12" grid





By Venita Lake and Richard Schumacher
Illustrations by Rick Johnson and Robert Wegner

The St. Louis Central is a big-city railroad operation in a 4 x 8-foot space with a number of options for later expansion. It has been designed to pay tribute to the Midwestern city of St. Louis, Mo., but it can represent any large or medium-size city where a number of railroads come together and share trackage.

In St. Louis, the Terminal Railroad Association is a co-operative arrangement allowing many railroads to converge where the railroad bridges cross the mighty Mississippi River. At one time the TRRA managed the exceptionally heavy passenger traffic serving St. Louis Union Station. Our fictional SLC follows that theme, and since St. Louis was served by many Class 1 railroads, most other road power would be right at home on this layout.

The track plan uses several tall structures as a view block down the middle. These buildings can be painted to resemble some of the prominent rail-

road buildings that now serve or were originally built by the railroads that passed through the city.

Structure selection

St. Louis was well known for its fine brick buildings, so models were chosen with this in mind. The multistory downtown structures along the street effectively divide the layout into multiple scenes and provide plenty of switching.

Micro Engineering, a St. Louis-area model manufacturer, based its viaduct on a downtown St. Louis prototype. As a classic example of St. Louis railroad architecture, it was used here, extending the industrial area switch lead in the layout's lower left corner while adding visual texture and another expansion option from the upper right corner.

While the track design allows a single train a continuous run, it also provides many operational opportunities and several options for adding to the basic layout. 🚂

Bill of materials

American Model Builders

(structures keyed to track plan)

1. 702 interlocking tower

Bachmann Spectrum

2. 88002 Ambassador Hotel

City Classics

3. 103 Smallman Street warehouse and 104 warehouse add-on kit
4. 106 East Ohio Street building (2)

Design Preservation Models

5. 106 Laube's Linen Mill
6. 354 Fedups Freight Co.
7. 362 Industrial building

Heljan

8. 807 brewery

Micro Engineering

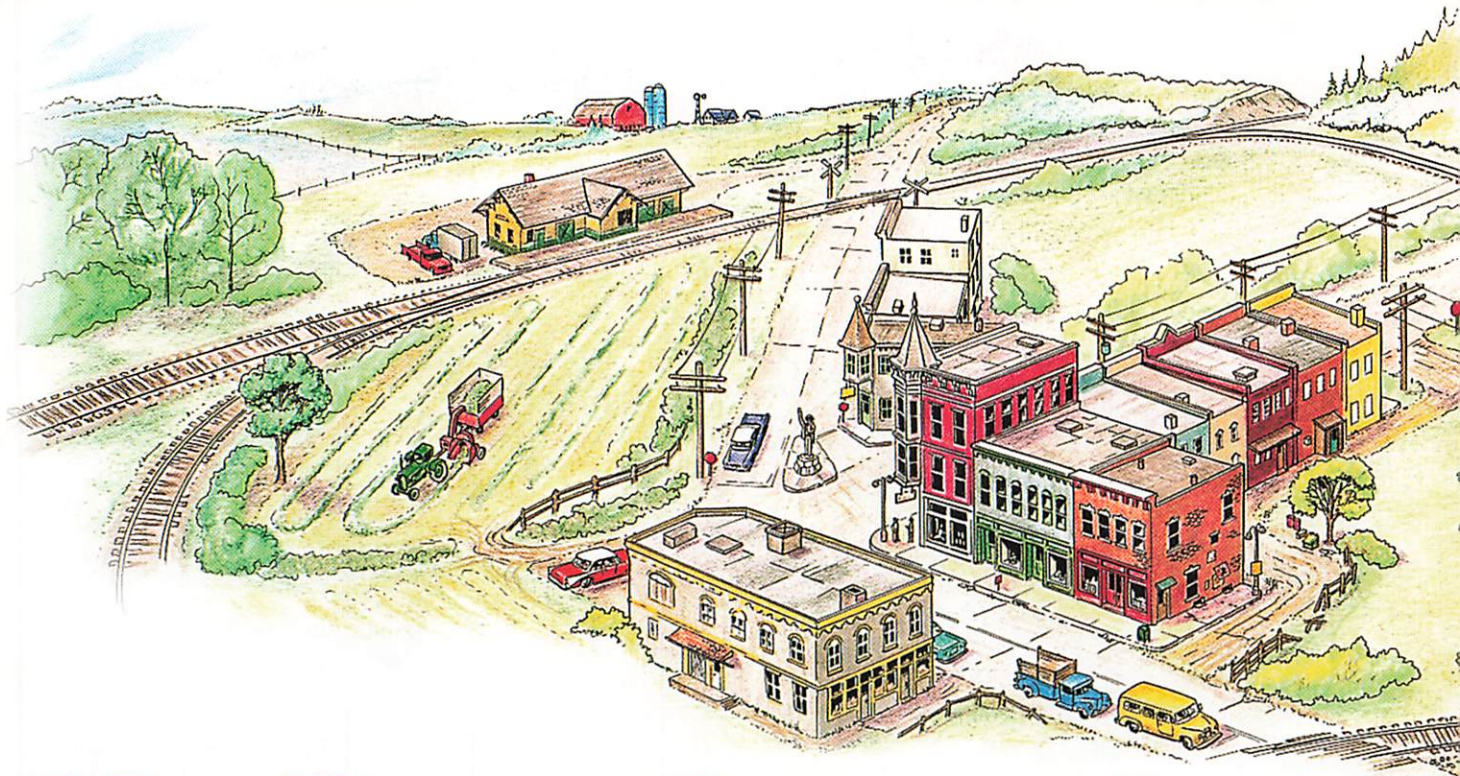
9. 75511 150-foot viaduct
10. 75520 50-foot through girder bridge

Walthers

11. 3022 grain elevator
12. 3030 White Tower restaurant
13. 3044 Hardwood Furniture Co.
14. 3078 tire plant
15. 3138 concrete streets (3)
16. 3506 substation
17. 3707 team track set

Atlas track

- (11) 9" straight
- (1) 6" straight
- (1) 1" straight
- (3) ¾" straight
- (9) 18" radius
- (2) ½ 18" radius
- (3) ⅓ 18" radius
- (7) 36" flextrack
- (6) left-hand no. 4 Custom-Line turnout
- (3) right-hand no. 4 Custom-Line turnout
- (1) left-hand no. 6 Custom-Line turnout
- (2) 25-degree crossing
- (3) bumper



Madison Central

By Jim Hediger

Illustrations by Robert Wegner

Southern Wisconsin has rolling wooded hills interspersed with gravel moraines that remained after the ice age glaciers receded. Numerous quarries were established to supply construction projects all over the Midwest. That's why I chose a gravel plant as the theme industry.

The Madison Central, which represents a mid-1960s short line operating on a former Chicago & North Western branch line, originates in Madison, runs along Lake Mendota, and then heads off into the Baraboo Hills to the north.

Benchwork and a plan

The railroad is designed to fit on flat-topped benchwork that's made from a 4 x 8-foot sheet of plywood framed with 1 x 4s. It's supported with a 2 x 2 leg at each corner and 1 x 2 diagonal braces to stabilize each leg.

The Madison Central track plan uses Atlas True-Track, included in the firm's train set. The track can be separated from the roadbed if you want to spray-paint it in more realistic colors.

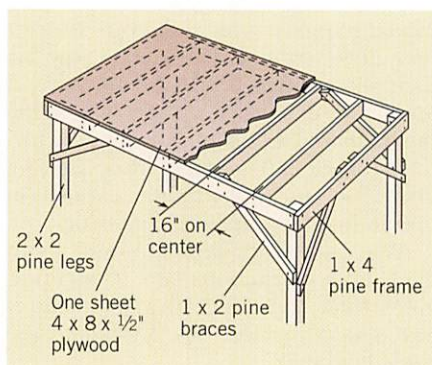
The layout uses all of the track supplied in an Atlas train set plus some additional items. The bill of materials lists the pieces needed for the layout.

Because of its size, the layout is made with 18"-radius curves. The main line is angled in a kidney shape to break up the feeling of following the table edges. This produces a number of odd-shaped corners that can be filled in with low, wooded hills or a farm.

Cut a small section of Lake Mendota into one long edge of the layout to provide a reason for the curve in the track. Add a high hill in one corner to serve as a background for the quarry. Straight sections are located ahead of each turnout to increase reliability of pushing movements during switching.

Scenery and structures

Even though the railroad is built on a flat surface, there are two areas where some interesting scenery is called for.



One shore of Lake Mendota is visible along the track just beyond the Lakeshore Road grade crossing. This can be represented by cutting out a piece of the plywood top, notching the framing underneath it, and then reattaching the cutout at a lower level. Use plaster and ground foam to simulate the shoreline, and protect the track with a line of rip-rap made from large rocks. Then use Woodland Scenics E-Z Water to simulate the lake.

Bill of materials

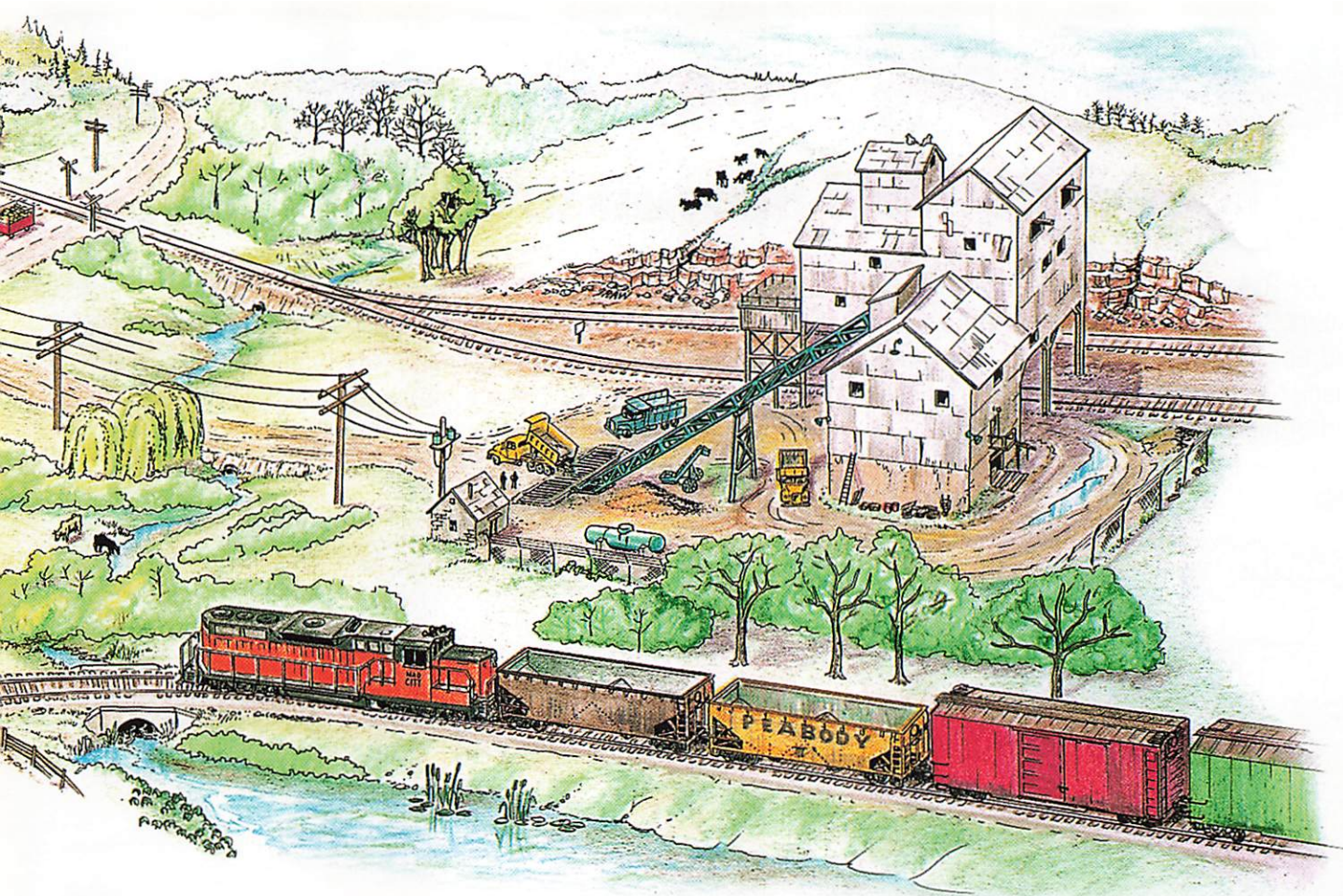
Atlas True-Track

- (11) 410 9" straight
- (20) 411 18" radius
- (2) 452 3" straight
- (2) 478 Snap-Switch, left
- (2) 479 Snap-Switch, right

Walthers

(structures keyed to track plan)

- 1. 3063 Clarksville Depot
- 2. 3002 Bill's Glass Shop
- 3. 3000 Don's Shoe Store
- 4. 3034 Adam's Ribs Restaurant
- 5. 3064 Merchant's Row III
- 6. 3029 Merchant's Row II
- 7. 3028 Merchant's Row I
- 8. 3062 Glacier Gravel Co.



A gravel plant is the railroad's major customer. It should be set against a high, rocky hillside, covered with trees.

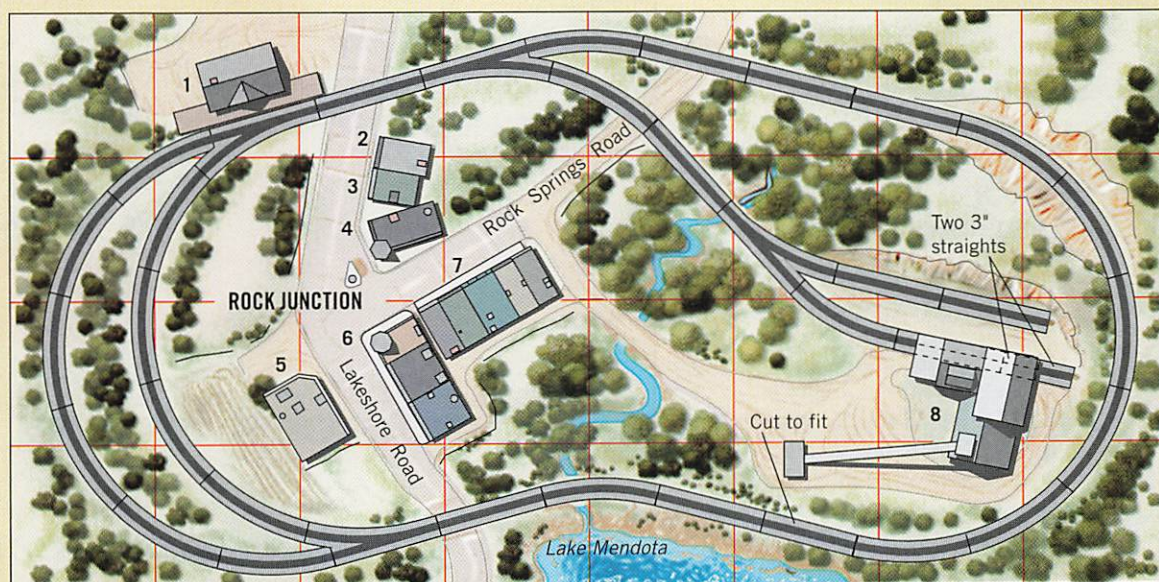
The quarry bunker's track spacing won't fit over both spur tracks; position it so one track runs under the end bunker and the other passes alongside. Add a gravel driveway under the remaining bunker to load trucks.

There's plenty of room to add a nice small town in the middle of the layout. Here again, a couple of angled roads help break up the rectangular feeling and provide a more realistic intersection.

Highball

There's some interesting switching if the passing siding is used as an inter-

change track. The MCRR's switcher could start from the quarry spur, make several laps around the railroad, then pick up a cut of empties. Next it returns to the quarry and switches the empty cars into loading positions as the outbound loads are picked up. A return trip to the interchange track with the outbound loads completes the cycle. ⚙

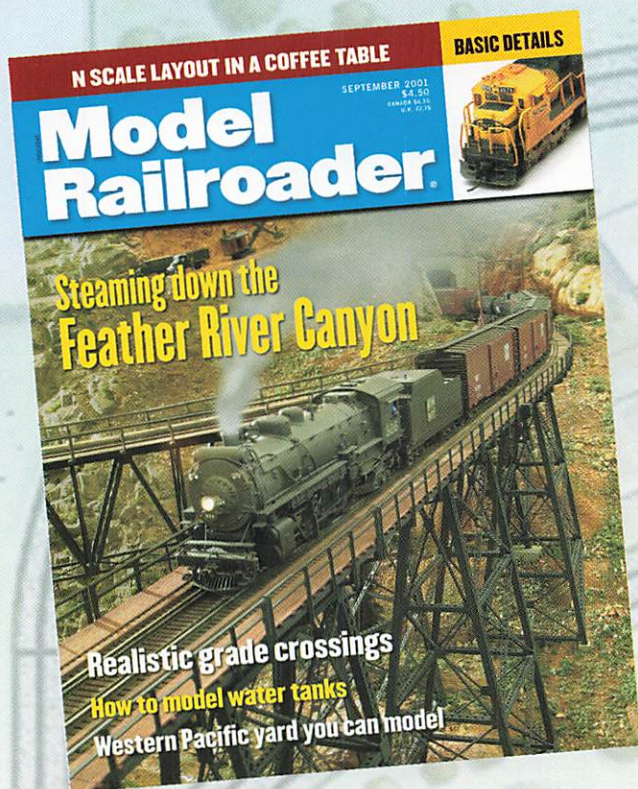


Scale: $\frac{3}{4}$ " = 1'-0" 12" grid

Start your layout on the right track!

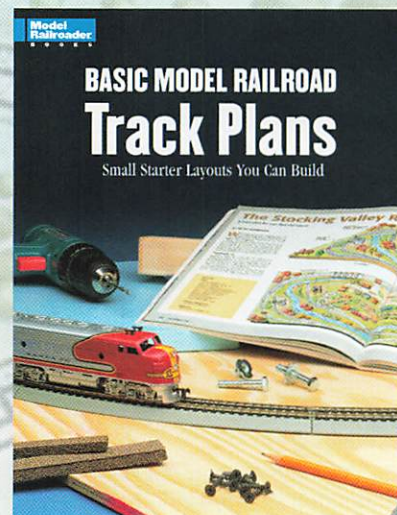
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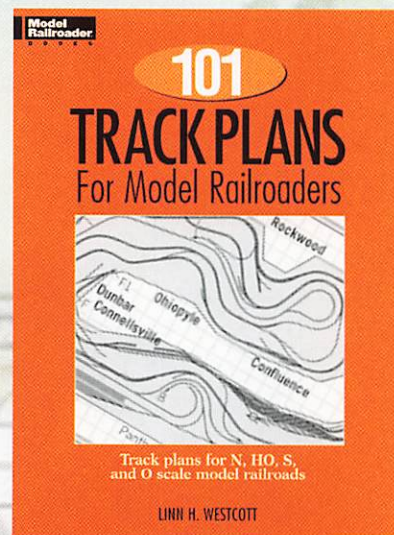


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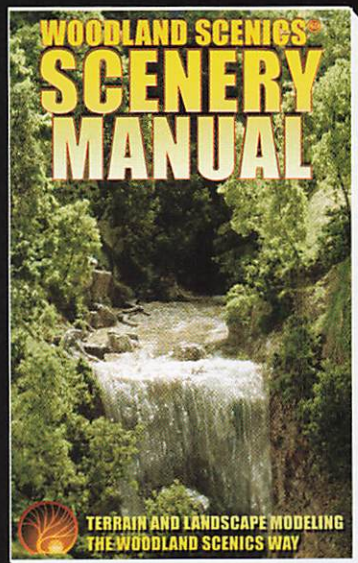
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ITEM # DESCRIPTION

- 44565 No. 5 Left Hand Switch
44566 No. 5 Right Hand Switch
44569 No. 5 Wye Switch

MSRP \$25.00
SHIPPING NOW

ITEM # DESCRIPTION

- 44575 No. 6 Left Hand Crossover Switch
44576 No. 6 Right Hand Crossover Switch

MSRP \$45.00
SHIPPING NOW



Ken Peterson